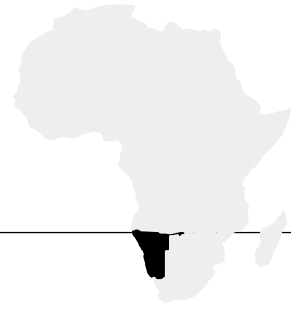


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# NAMIBIA

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## BACKGROUND

Namibia gained its independence on March 21, 1990, and so ended more than one century of German colonial and South African apartheid rule and a 12-year liberation struggle. Its 1997 population of approximately 1.7 million includes a rich diversity of ethnic and cultural groups who speak 12 different major languages.

Although Namibia's GDP per capita of US\$1,917 is almost four times higher than that of the rest of sub-Saharan Africa, there is a highly unequal income distribution. Over half the population lives below the poverty line. The historically disadvantaged poor population is concentrated in the nine northern socio-political regions, with Caprivi, Okavango, Ohangwena, and Kunene as the most deprived. Approximately 32% of the population is illiterate and unemployment is estimated at between 35 and 40%. However, Namibia is blessed with physical assets and a natural resource base that are superior to most developing countries. A positive legacy of the colonial period is a highly developed infrastructure of roads, ports, airports, modern communications, and a well established banking and financial system.

Namibia's GDP is largely generated in four sectors: mining (32%), general government (18%), wholesale and retailing (13%), and agriculture and fishing (11%). In 1998, Namibia was directly affected by declining world market prices for leading exports as well as currency depreciation. The economy fell sharply dropping from a 4.3% growth rate in 1997 to 0.8% in 1998.

The Government of Namibia remains committed to removal of the considerable vestiges of apartheid's social and economic policies. The government commitment to education reform is evident in that education receives over 25% of the national budget.

<b>Namibia Social and Economic Indicators</b>	<b>Namibia 1997</b>	<b>Namibia 1994</b>	<b>Sub-Saharan Africa 1994</b>
<b>Population Structure &amp; Growth</b>			
Population (millions)	1.62	1.50	563.82
% Population 0 to 14	42	42	-
Population growth rate	2.5	2.6	-
Urban population as % of total population	38.0 <sup>2</sup>	35.0	30.6
<b>Mortality &amp; Life Expectancy</b>			
Infant mortality rate	65	-	91 <sup>3</sup>
Under 5 mortality rate	100	-	147 <sup>3</sup>
Life expectancy (m/f)	55/57	-	49/52 <sup>3</sup>
<b>Economic Performance &amp; Expenditures</b>			
GNP per capita (U.S.\$)	2,110	2,120	489
GNP growth rate	-	13.0 <sup>1, 4</sup>	-1 <sup>1, 4</sup>
Military expenditure as % of GNP	2.1 <sup>5</sup>	-	-
Public spending on education as % of GNP (all levels)	9.1 <sup>6</sup>	9.1	4.3
<b>Development Assistance &amp; Debt</b>			
Official development assistance per capita (\$)	102.00	-	-
Official development assistance as % of GNP	5.0	-	-
Total external debt (billions, \$)	.085	-	-
Total external debt as % of GNP	68.0	83.9	74.4
<b>Illiteracy</b>			
Adult illiteracy (m/f)	19/22	20/23 <sup>5</sup>	35/52 <sup>5</sup>

Sources: World Bank, Data Development Group, 1999. UNDP

<sup>1</sup>*Statistical Profile of Education in Sub-Saharan Africa (SPESSA)*, UNESCO/World Bank Data, 1998.

<sup>2</sup>Data from 1994.

<sup>3</sup>Data from 1997.

<sup>4</sup>Data from 1990-1996.

<sup>5</sup>Data from 1995.

<sup>6</sup>Data from 1996.

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## STATUS OF NAMIBIA'S EDUCATION REFORM

The education system that Namibia inherited at independence in 1990 was fragmented along racial and ethnic lines with vast disparities in the allocation of available resources. Education in “South West Africa” had been administered by 11 race and ethnic-based departments of education. One of the biggest challenges the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture (MBEC) faced in its first years was centralizing the system from 11 administrations, while at the same time democratizing the system. It did so by establishing seven new education regions determined on a geographical, not racial, basis. As of 1997 there were 1,452 schools providing instruction to 507,655 learners, of which 70% were in the four poorest educational regional in the north.

In 1991 the MBEC launched a basic education reform program with a focus on lower primary grades (1-4), development of a new national curriculum in local languages, and teacher development. In the upper grades, it introduced the International Cambridge System of equivalencies to allow Namibian students to compete internationally.

In 1993 the MBEC issued a publication, *Toward Education for All*, which provided the rationale, goals, and objectives for the education reform program to move from a segregated selective system for the few to an integrated system of education for all. The reform program goals include providing 10 years of basic education for all Namibian learners by improving access, equity, quality, and democracy. There is an explicit focus on the need for teaching, curriculum, and assessment to focus on successful learning. USAID and other donors have supported the MBEC as it works to achieve these goals.

USAID's intervention in basic education continues to provide technical assistance, training, and commodity support for the development of an improved curricula at lower primary grades one through four in five local languages. A series of USAID-funded teacher training modules have been accepted in the National Instructional Skills Certificate Program, which will be required for all teachers within the next five years. The incorporation of these training modules by the Namibian government has positive long-term implications for higher educational standards and project impact and sustainability. Activities assist teachers to test and apply better curriculum and teaching methods. There is evidence already that the quality of education provided to students in grades one and two in targeted schools has improved from some of these education reform policy initiatives. USAID, as the major donor at the primary level, has played a key role in assisting the Government of the Republic of Namibia (GRN) to refocus its resources and personnel on primary education and the lower primary level in particular. This will result in fundamental, long-term benefits for Namibia with respect to reduction of illiteracy, improved quality of education provided, and increased efficiency of the entire education system.

## USAID PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

The Basic Education Support Project (BES) approach has been to assist the MBEC to implement its national education reform program in order to provide historically disadvantaged Namibians with the basic competencies of a primary school education. Only in this way can they advance to higher levels of education and obtain the skills needed for full participation in the political, economic, and social life of their country.

USAID's support consists primarily of technical assistance, offshore and in-county training, and some commodity support. Its GRN partners include the National Institute for Educational Development, the departments of Planning and Development and Educational Programme Implementation, the National Examinations Administrations, and four of the seven regional offices. USAID is providing assistance

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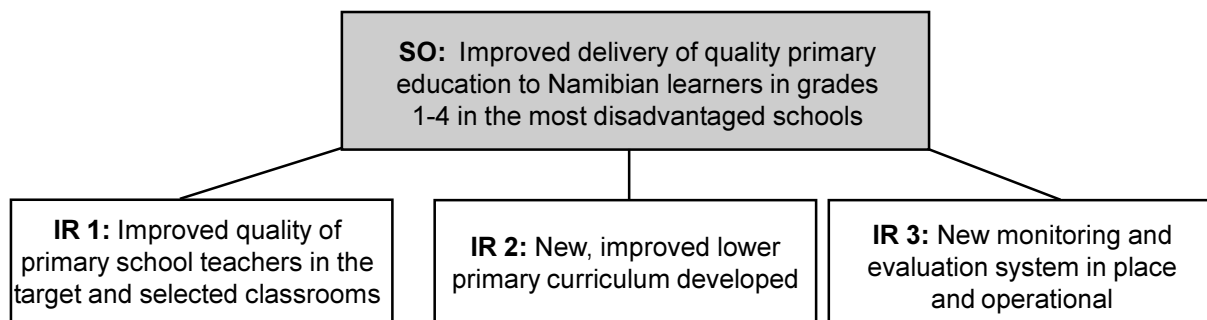
through a primary U.S. institutional contractor, the American Institute for Research—Center for International Research, as well as the Peace Corps, a group of universities led by the University of Montana, and a Namibian NGO, the Rossing Foundation.

BES focuses on target schools in the four educational regions of Katima Mulilo, Rundu, Ondangwa East, and Ondangwa West. The primary school students in the four regions account for more than 70% of the total primary student population in Namibia.

BES has focused its support in three major areas:

- ♦ *Structured Instructional Materials (SIMS) and Continuous Assessment Materials (CAMs)*: USAID has provided technical assistance and training to NIED and others for the development of carefully structured and scripted instructional materials that unqualified or under qualified teachers can use to provide a classroom environment designed for learner centered education.
- ♦ *Teacher Training*: USAID has worked with a central training unit and the regional office to train teachers in the use of the SIMS materials. BES has also contributed to the provision of Peace Corps volunteers to provide support and follow-up as the teachers use the SIMS in their classrooms, and has provided training and support for teachers studying to improve their teaching qualifications.
- ♦ *Monitoring and Evaluation*: USAID and the Rossing Foundation are assisting the MBEC to develop monitoring and evaluation capability, both through training and workshops as well as through joint conduct of topic specific research and analyses.

## Strategic Objective and Intermediate Results



## Program Title, Funding, and Dates

### **Basic Education Support Project (BES)**

**Project Number: 673-0006**

*Funding level*

\$20.2 million

*Initial obligation date and estimated completion date*

1993-2003

### **Basic Education Support II Project (BES II)**

**Project Number: 673-0011**

*Funding level*

\$12.9 million

*Initial obligation date and estimated completion date*

1993-2003

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## Program Conditionalities

USAID has not provided nonproject assistance to Namibia since 1993.

## Project Contractors

Key U.S. implementing partners include the American Institute for Research–Center for International Research, Ohio University, Harvard Institute for International Development, the Peace Corps, and the University of Montana. Additional regional and Namibian institutions are University of Western Cape University of Namibia, and Rossing Foundation (Namibia).

<b>Namibia Education Indicators</b>	<b>Namibia 1996</b>	<b>Namibia 1994</b>	<b>Sub-Saharan Africa 1994</b>
<b>Primary (Grades 1-7)</b>			
Total enrollment (thousands)	372.3	-	-
Gross enrollment ratio	131.3	131.1	76.7
Gross enrollment ratio, female	132.2	137.2	69.2
Teachers (thousands)	-	-	-
Teachers, % female	-	-	-
Pupil-teacher ratio	-	-	-
<b>Secondary (Grades 8-12)</b>			
Total enrollment (thousands)	104.5	102.0 <sup>1</sup>	-
Gross enrollment ratio	61.3	63.3	26.5
Gross enrollment ratio, female	66.4	69.5	24.4
Teachers (thousands)	-	-	-
Teachers, % female	-	-	-
Pupil-teacher ratio		-	-
<b>Tertiary</b>			
Total enrollment (thousands)	11.3 <sup>1, 3</sup>	9.7 <sup>1</sup>	-
Gross enrollment ratio	9.0	7.1	3.1
Gross enrollment ratio, female	9.9 <sup>1, 3</sup>	8.8 <sup>1</sup>	-
<b>Finance</b>			
Education as % of GNP	9.1	9.1	4.3
Primary education as % of total education budget	-	-	-
Per pupil expenditure, primary (\$)	317 <sup>1, 3</sup>	343 <sup>3</sup>	-
<b>Demographic and Health Survey Data-1992<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Primary net attendance ratio	88	91	90
Primary school completion rate	37	39	38
Secondary net attendance ratio	16	21	18

Primary Source: World Bank, Data Development Group, 1999.

<sup>1</sup>*Statistical Profile of Education in Sub-Saharan Africa (SPESSA)*, UNESCO/World Bank Data, 1998.

<sup>2</sup>DHS definitions—

Primary net attendance ratio: percent of the official primary school age population (6-11 in Benin) that attends primary school.

Primary school completion rate: percent of the population age 15 and older that has completed primary school or higher.

Secondary net attendance ratio: percent of the official secondary school age population (age 12-18) that attends secondary school.

<sup>3</sup>Data from 1995.

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## OTHER DONORS WITH EDUCATION PROGRAMS

USAID is the principal donor providing assistance at the lower-primary education level. Other donors supporting the GRN in primary education include UNICEF, the United Kingdom, Finland, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, the Netherlands, UNESCO, the EU, and UNDP.

